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Utah: Ten suggested things to do

See the wild bison from horseback on Antelope Island State Park, the largest island in the Great Salt Lake. If you are confident in the saddle, the bison are rounded up in October, and the public can watch it unfold.

This is not as ecologically flawed as it might sound because these monstrous military style vehicles run on biodiesel. There can be few more exhilarating ways of discovering the badlands of the area you might even see dinosaur footprints by the roadside. Hike, climb, abseil and chimney (shimmying your way down confined canyon walls) in the wilderness just outside Zion National Park. All abilities are catered for.

Captivating by day, this national park is also an extraordinary place to visit at night, with light pollution almost non-existent. Guides are on hand to point out the best places from which to view the heavens.

More information Bryce Canyon National Park (www.nps.gov/brca)

The mountains surrounding Salt Lake City are known for the unusually deep, dry snow that falls from late October to March. The powdery conditions, a climatic quirk due to the salinity of the nearby lake, draw unusually zealous fans of the skiing. Many of the resorts are within an hours drive of Salt Lake City airport.

The capital of Utah, Salt Lake City, is well known for its thriving Mormon religious community. In the heart of the central Temple Square, visitors can eat at the Roof Restaurant with views over the imposing temple and the city. No alcohol is served.

Utah was prime dinosaur territory and archaeological discoveries are still being made. Later this year, a revamped Utah Museum of Natural History in Salt Lake City will open to the public with exhibits on the areas remarkable geology and wildlife, past and present.

If one geological feature has defined the State of Utah, this is it the shape appears in licence plates and is instantly recognisable. It is also quite easy to reach, a three-mile round-trip hike over a remarkable, swirling sandstone landscape.

If you are pressed for time and would like an introduction to canyon culture, take a tour from the Arizona town of Page (just across the Utah border). The canyons swirls and curves are mesmerising but be prepared for crowds.

One of the largest collections of ancestral Indian pottery can be seen at the Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum. The collection includes many well-preserved, finely wrought artefacts and an authentic Puebloan village behind the museum.

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